# Air Quality Workgroup
## Summary Statements and Recommendations

General Statements

1. The evaluation of air quality impacts was based on information contained in alternative descriptions as of March 28, 2006. Changes to alternatives occurring after that date were not considered as part of this programmatic impact analysis.

2. The evaluation of air quality impacts resulting from restoration activities was limited to comparing the relative emission levels of the non-attainment pollutants, $PM_{10}$ and NOx, for the various alternatives. The emission levels should only be used to compare alternatives to one another and are not representative of absolute levels of emissions for any of the alternatives.

3. Emission estimations were based on assumptions that would need to be verified and could change as part of project-level environmental analysis. Uniform assumptions were used as part of the analysis of air quality impacts to facilitate comparison among alternatives.

4. Standard methods of construction and uniform mitigation measures for control of playa dust emissions were included as part of most alternatives; however, different methods of construction and mitigation measures could be included as part of all alternatives during project-level environmental analysis to help further reduce emissions.

5. Prior to implementation, the preferred alternative would be required to demonstrate conformity with the applicable SIP. Demonstrating General Conformity for alternatives could be done by lengthening the construction time period; identifying and providing acceptable emission offsets; modifying the approved SIP to accommodate the increase in emissions; or a combination of these measures.

Key Workgroup Conclusions

1. Emissions of $PM_{10}$ and NOx occurring during the peak operations phase (Phase 4: 2040 - 2078) of the project would be of greater significance than emissions during the peak construction phase (Phase 1: Initiation to 2020) because operational impacts would occur over a longer period of time.

2. Generally, air quality impacts from restoration activities increase relative to the complexity of the alternatives. Alternatives that involve construction of large barriers generate much more emissions than alternatives involving construction of mainly saline habitat complex.

3. Currently, estimates of total $PM_{10}$ and NOx emissions for all alternatives exceed local significance threshold levels; however, for many alternatives these emissions could likely be reduced to levels below local significance thresholds by the use of less-emissive equipment and/or implementation of more efficient methods of playa dust control. Notwithstanding, even with less emissive approaches, alternatives that involve movement of large amounts of rock and gravel may still exceed local significance thresholds for non-attainment pollutants.

4. Additional air quality monitoring at sites around the Sea, research on playa emissivity, salt chemistry and crusting dynamics, and pilot testing of various dust control methods and efficiencies are urgently needed to help formulate an acceptable air quality management plan for restoration of the Salton Sea.

5. Insufficient information exists to accurately access odor, microclimate, salt dispersion/deposition, and other air quality-related impacts of proposed restoration alternatives. Project-specific analysis of the preferred alternative would be required to evaluate the extent and magnitude of these impacts.